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# SAKHI

A Women's Initiative for  
Women



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Contact Person: Mrs. Suman Singh Address: Registered Office: Matsya Nagar, Bhagwatipur, PO- Rudrapur, Andhrathari, Jhanjharpur, Madhubani Administrative Office: Aparana Bank Colony, Phase II, Ramjaipal Road, New Baily Road, Patna, 801503

Phone Number: 9431021204, 9931449110 Email: [sakhibihar@gmail.com](mailto:sakhibihar@gmail.com), [sakhipatna@rediffmail.com](mailto:sakhipatna@rediffmail.com)

Web site: [www.sakhibihar.com](http://www.sakhibihar.com)

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**Brief Organization Profile:**

Though formally registered as an NGO in 1999, SAKHI has had a long standing presence in North Bihar as a team involved in coordinating one of the field projects involved with another NGO ADITHI under the leadership of Late Viji Srinivasan, who was the pioneer of bringing into existence a whole new journey of social sector through her visionary approach of creating decentralised units of NGOs in different parts of Bihar which would deal with the theme/community specific issues. This approach gave way to many decentralised NGO units which later went on to become independent unit under their efficient Leaders identified by the organization. SAKHI's journey started as one in Madhubanidistrict which took up the issue of Women empowerment through Fisheries and Non formal education of the children of these fisher community households. This project, initiated with the support of Swiss Red Cross(Switzerland) in Andhrathari Block of Madhubani District in 1990, aimed at empowerment of fisherwomen through enabling their access to government ponds on lease, equipping them with technical and managerial skills, providing start-up capital support and consequently contributing to a steady enhancement in their income levels. Towards this end, the critical intervention was that of organizing the poor fisherwomen into self-help groups and their registration as a women's cooperative society. As a support service to these women, the components of health and education were also included with the former focusing on reproductive and child health and later, on non formal education through non formal education centres for children in the age group of 6-18 through.

The quality of work carried out in the fisherwomen community brought the project under increasing demand from other communities, particularly the dalits, for extension of similar support to their hamlets; thus obliging the organization to bring these deprived communities as well under its coverage. Since then Sakhi has been undertaking various Impactful projects on various social issues in collaboration with various partners and creating an impact which clearly shows at the grassroots level as the community's overall income and livelihood options has enhanced and become self sustainable over the years and the community has become more aware of their rights.

**Theme areas:**

Having worked on the various projects since its inception, Sakhi now holds an expertise in various social themes like Fisheries, Education, Health, Sanitation, menstrual health and hygiene management, Agriculture, Trafficking, digital literacy, co-operatives, women empowerment, livelihood, menstrual health and hygiene management, child rights, child labour, domestic violence . The district level presence of Sakhi has been in darbhanga ,Saharsha, supaul, muzaffarpur, motihari, bhojpur, baxuar, nawada, patna amongst the other districts of Bihar.

**Mission:**

To strive for Socio-economic empowerment of women and girl child of the families living under poverty line by improving their existing conditions through sustainable self help groups, leadership strategy and advocacy for their rights to equality and safety.

**Vision:**

A society free from gender based discrimination and violence on women. A society where women have control on their body and life and equal and thriving opportunities exist for all.

**Objectives:**

- To awaken women about their rights through sensitivity training Programmes and community participation.
- To eradicate social evils affecting women and girl children, through awareness and community organization.
- To mobilize the community against the atrocities against women.
- To mobilize the community against female foeticide elimination.
- To promote sustainable and viable economic enterprises of women for their economic independence
- To impart non-formal education to girl children & women to bring them into the mainstream of education.
- To impart training and mobilize women to take up business enterprises to make them self- employed and self-reliant.
- To take up immunization and family welfare programme for women and girl children.
- To improve community level preparedness and capacity to respond in flood emergencies.
- To develop livelihood and income generating opportunities for women like, fisheries, dairy, agriculture, live stock management, vegetable cultivation, vending etc.
- To sensitize Police Officials & Prosecutors on Trafficking issues in Bihar.
- To aware people about the sanitation and proper use of Water and hygiene practices.
- To spread awareness about use of renewable and safe sources of energy in their daily lives.

**Donors till Date:**

***International/Bilateral Agencies :***

Swiss Red cross, Oxfam, Geneva Global, International Development USA, IWMI, CIMMYT, Global Sanitation Fund, Water Aid, World Education, Malala Foundation, Aga Khan Foundation, Sir Dorabji tata Trust, Jamshedji Tata Trust, Save The Children, World Education

***Government Agencies :***

Women and Child Development corporation, BRLPS, RGVN, Central Institute, WASSAN PACS, NABARD, ICAR, Child Line Centre.

***Network Groups :***

CCHT, CBATN, URJA, National Fish Forum, ZilaNigrani Samiti, Bihar Inter Agency Group

**PROJECTS****1. CHILD LINE, MADHUBANI:****Project Aim:**

SAKHI runs a sub-centre of Childline to provide assistance for the underage vulnerable children of the city with an aim to provide support for their protection and rehabilitation from human/child trafficking. The service is provided through a toll free 24 hour emergency phone service (1098). It aims to respond not only to emergency needs but also to link them to various services established for their long term care and rehabilitation. This one point contact is meant to facilitate instant access to support, advice and active intervention. The project falls under Women and Child Development Corporation , Gov. of India.

**The following activities are carried out under this project:**

- Developing bridge between administration, police and other line departments to ensure children's rights.
- Capacity building of the ground staff/ counsellors related to child protection, child rights etc.
- Co-ordinating rescue and other outreach services with the help of relevant local departments like police, administration, labor, health, railways and others.
- Ensuring proper documentation of all rescued children to facilitate their rehabilitation and restoration, wherever necessary.
- Producing children before the child welfare committee(CWC) for ensuring care and protection.
- Providing data related to children rescued & rehabilitated for the compilation of a national comprehensive database of child protection.
- Creating awareness and ensuring access to the 1098 Child helpline number.
- Initiation of prosecution and follow up in cases of child abuse, child trafficking, child labour and commercial sexual exploitation of children.
- Documentation, awareness and advocacy on issues related to child helpline
- Establishing linkages with other child protection services, community and local bodies for meeting the immediate needs of children rescued.

**Progress made:**

- We reported a total of 59 cases from across 6 blocks namely Andhrathari, phoolparaas, Babubarhi, Ghoghardhia, Laukhi, Laukha of the district.
- The cases varied from Child marriage, missing children as a result of child trafficking, child labour, run away, missing, sexual abuse, cases.
- 6 child marriages were reported to which the team intervened and prevented from taking place. 10 missing children were reported who were made to run away with either the neighbour or some relative or some acquaintance from the village by luring into a bright future. 2 children was reported under child labour who were rescued from a nearby district and brought back to their respective village.



- 2 lost and found cases were reported, 3 Home investigation were reported, 5 physical abuse cases were reported, 8 child marriage cases were reported, 4 medical investigation cases were reported.
- 6 child trafficking cases were reported, 1 kidnapping case was reported, 22 other interventions which included counselling, emotional support were undertaken.
- 2 PRI meetings were conducted in order to discuss the status of the panchayat and generating sensitivity towards the issues.
- 2 gram sabha meetings were conducted with the community in order to generate awareness regarding the program and spreading information on the childline number 1098.
- 1 block level meeting was conducted with the block officers, ANM, Asha workers, BRC/CRC, Aanganwadisewikas, police officers for sensitising and generating awareness and their role in the process and how they may facilitate the process.
- All children were provided emotional support and were counselled in order to bring them back in the mainstream so they can continue to pursue their education and empower themselves so that they don't fall back in the chain again.
- The children were supported by the team to acquire their Birth certificate and disabled certificate from the concerned department/ school.
- An awareness campaign was conducted through Village Fair during the festival where mass gathering takes place, all about childline helpline number 1098 and what it does and how community can reach out under what circumstances was announced.
- Pamphlets were also distributed amongst the community in which all the information was provided.

## **2. COVID-19 Intervention: SAKHI**

The year 2019 brought with it the never before witnessed kind of an epidemic in the form of Corona Virus which took the world by the storm claiming lives one after the other across Globe. This took the world by the storm as time progressed. The

Healthcare services started to collapse in the absence of the preparations as nobody knew how about of the virus and government seemed to lack behind in reaching out to the increasing demand of healthcare facilities in across the districts.

In such a situation, Sakhi took this up as its social and moral responsibility and intervened at the grassroot level through various initiatives. The government highly appreciated our step towards the community in such a dire situation. Following were the activities that were undertaken:

- Sakhi's training centre was converted into quarantine centre for those who showed symptoms of any sort and needed to be into institutional quarantine/isolation.
- An arrangement of 30 beds was done and all the basic requirements were provided like sanitizer, soap, snacks etc for the safe and comfortable stay of the people.
- Community awareness programmes were conducted across panchayats of Andhrathari block regarding Covid prevention, care and safety measures
- 10,000 population was covered under awareness programmes.
- 10,000 masks were distributed amongst these community members.
- Sanitizers and soaps were distributed amongst these community.
- A good number of Migrant labours who had returned home were sensitised about safety measures to be taken for themselves as well as for their family.



- 2000 girls were provided with Sanitary napkins for better management of menstruation during the pandemic situation.

### 3. Mission Swavalamban (SIDBI)



Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), set up on April 2, 1990 under an Act of Indian Parliament, which acts as the Principal Financial Institution for the Promotion, Financing and Development of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector and for coordination of the functions of the institutions engaged in similar activities, has kickstarted **Mission Swavalamban** to foster entrepreneurship culture in the country.

In order to further strengthen Mission Swavalamban, SIDBI has joined hands with LetsEndorse Development Pvt. Ltd. to launch **Swavalamban Connect Kendras** in selected 100 districts of India in Phase 1 of the program, which aims to empower 10,000 micro-enterprises (7,000 new and 3,000 through scale-up capital). These Kendras (or physical centres for enterprise aspirants) shall play a pivotal role by creating awareness about entrepreneurship in the local area and leading aspirants through the process of enterprise set-up. Mission Swavalamban is a flagship program of SIDBI. Swavalamban Connect Kendras are empanelled by Lets Endorse to further the mission of creating and nurturing 10,000 MSMEs.

#### Following are the objectives of the project:

- Creating awareness in communities through organizing Sabhas, Nukkadnatakas etc.
- Approaching, understanding (due diligence) & profiling enterprise aspirant
- Linking the aspirants to relevant skill/entrepreneurship development program.
- Developing/refining business plan of aspirants.
- Fostering credit linkages with local banks, preferably under PM Mudra Yojana
- Ensuring enterprise setup
- Ensuring enterprise scale up & sustainability (regular check-ins, mentorship etc.)
- Awareness through mass campaigns (print/digital media).

#### Progress made:

- 2000 people were made aware about the program by holding 3 awareness meetings on entrepreneurship options and on the schemes like Mudra Yojna that are being run by the government for the people in order to support them for the same.
- As a result of the awareness, 800 people showed enthusiasm and applied for the loan.
- Out of them 100 people started their own business and small enterprises like grocery store, tea snacks store, cosmetic store, vegetable and fruit vending, carpentry, mobile repairing shops etc. with the assistance of the organization as we connected them with the Banks and helped in getting loans for their respective venture.

#### 4. SFURTI Scheme under MSME for Makhana Cluster development:

##### Origin of Cluster:

Gorgon nut or fox nut, commonly known as makhana, is an aquatic crop with large floating leaves, producing bright purple flowers. Botanically it is known as *Euryale ferox* and it belongs to family Nymphaeaceae. Distribution of Makhana is limited to tropical and sub-tropical regions of South East and East Asia. However, it occurs in wild form in Japan, Korea, Bangladesh, China and Russia. Makhana is a high value commodity commercially cultivated only in Bihar and certain parts of eastern India. Besides this, it grows as a natural crop in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, Tripura and Manipur. With abundance of many natural and man-made water bodies' rich in organic detritus; makhana grows profusely in the stagnant water of wetlands, tanks, ponds, lakes and ditches in the northern parts of Bihar. Besides stagnant water bodies, it is also cultivated in paddy fields and low-lying areas.



District Madhubani occupies the highest share in total production of makhana pop. It is estimated that the production of pop in the district is around 3500 MT and it holds a share of 20% followed by Katihar, which accounts for 18% of the total production of the state. Since makhana is a cash crop, it is exported from Bihar to different parts of India and even outside the country and the major consuming markets are Delhi, Kanpur and Varanasi etc. Makhana is a highly nutritious crop and the main edible part is popped seed which is used for preparation of kheer, snack items etc. The clusters are also prone to floods due to Kamala and Bhutani Balaan rivers. The economy is primarily agrarian with pisciculture as an important source of revenue for farmers. Makhana is native to Madhubani and adept processors of the clusters are well acknowledged outside the district for their processing skills. However, absence of industries and unemployment has led to considerable out migration of local work force to other states. On an average, a processor's family does processing of 40 –50 kg of makhana seeds in a day and earns an income of Rs 160 – 200 per day or Rs 4-6 per kg of seeds processed.

##### The aim of the project :

- To provide processing facility for better economic gain
- Provide technology ease to the beneficiaries as they are using conventional methods only.
- Marketing platform for the beneficiaries as middle man is taking most of the profits.



##### Progress made:

- Inauguration of CFC building and construction work is under progress for CFC(Common Facility Centre).
- Makhana Capacity building & awareness programme for 850 beneficiaries has been completed so far.
- Skill development training has been provided to 12 farmers through ICAR, Darbhanga.



- Identification of buyers and sellers.
- Procurement of machinery has been initiated and will be installed in next couple of months.

### 5. Hatchery & fish seed rearing centre:-

SAKHI is running fish hatchery cum fish seed rearing centre to support community with good quality seed for improved production of fish. Following activities are undertaken:



- Annual production of more than 60 million Lakh Spawn.
- Rearing of spawn to Zeera, Dhani, Fry & fingerlings.
- Supporting quality seed to the fish farmers.
- Capacity building of fish farmers on modern method of fish farming.
- Preventative and curative assistance for fish disease to the farmers.
- Awareness regarding market linkages and marketing strategies to the fisher community.
- Created awareness regarding government schemes and policies.

### Support Intervention:

**PHIA-** As the norms and regulations of the government has changed regarding the operations of the NGO, according to which there wouldn't be any direct NGO to NGO transfer. Due to this, PHIA is now directly implementing the project which initially was being implemented by Sakhi. Therefore, Sakhi's role henceforth is that of supporting agency at the field level by providing and assisting in deploying Human resource and liaison at the gross root level.



***Sakhi would like to extend its Heartfelt Thanks to all the donors who supported us in this financial year. We promise to continue working to serve or best with all our dedication and commitment in the future as well.***